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ABSTRACT

This book, intended for anyone involved in the education of English-as-a-Second-Language (ESL) students, explores the social and cultural factors in second language learning in the school setting. The first section examines the situation inside the classroom, looking at the characteristics of ESL learners, factors affecting their academic performance, influences on teaching practice, the practice of exploratory learning and teaching, processes occurring in "explorer" classrooms, what is meant by language acquisition, principal theories of second language acquisition, focusing on learners and their strengths, and celebrating the student's first language and culture. The second section looks at what happens outside the classroom, including the effects of community attitudes and English-only politics on students, influences on teacher and student attitudes, value conflicts, developing an intercultural teaching orientation, and involving parents of ESL students in the language learning process. In the third section, the focus turns to how teachers can use classroom research to improve teaching practice. Appended materials include lists of readings and resources for: second language teaching methods; second language acquisition; a classroom unit on plants; Spanish and Asian concerns; bilingual education and English-only politics; language varieties and functions; literature for diversity; and working with parents. (MSE)

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